

The payne and sorowe of euyll maryage.





103
The hede and lerne thou ytell chylde and fe
That tyme passed wyl not agayne retourne
And in thy pouthe vnto vertues vse the
Lette in thy best no maner byce sojourne
That in thyne aege thou haue no cause to
For tyme lost nor for defaute of wytte (mourne
Thynke on this lesson/ and in thy mynde it wytte

Gloze vnto god/ louinge and benyson
To Peter and Johan and also to Laurence
Whiche haue me take vnder proteccyon
From the deluge of mortall pestylence
And from the tempest of heedly violence
And me preserue that I fall not in the rage
Under the bonde and poeke of maryage

I was in purpose to haue taken a wyfe
And for to haue wedded without auycednes
A full fayre mayde with her to lede my lyfe
Whome that I loued of hasty wyllfulnes
With other fooles to haue lyued in dystresse
As some gaue me counseyle & began me to constrayne
To haue be partable of theyr woofull payne

They laye vpon me and hasted me full soze
And gaue me counseyle for to haue be bounde
And began to prayse eche daye more and more
The woofull lyfe in whiche they dyd habounde
And were besy my gladnes to confounde
Themselve reioysynge bothe at euen and moztowe
To haue a felowe to lyue with them in soztowe

But of his grace god hath me p̄serued
By the Doyle counseyle of these aungelles thre
From hell gates they haue my lyfe conserued
In tyme of warre whan louers lusty
And bryght phebus was freshest vnto se
In gemynys the lusty and glad season
Whan to wedde caught fyrst occasyon

My ioye was sette in espycally
To haue wedded one excellent in faynes
And thugh her beaute haue made my selfe thall
Under the yocke of euerlastynge dystresse
But god alonely of his hygh goodnes
Hath by an aungell as ye haue herde me tell
Stopped my passage from that peryllous hell

Amonge these aungelles that were in nombre thre
There appered one out of the southe
Whiche spake fyrst of all to the trynpte
All of one sentence the mater is full couth
And he was called Johan with the golden mouth
Whiche concluded by sentence full notable
Wyues of custome ben gladly varyable

After this Johan the story sayth also
In confymacyon of theyr fragylte
How that Peter called acorbylio
Aftermeth playnly how that wyues be
Wp̄uerse of herte full of duplycyte
Waysterfull hasty and eke proude
Crabbed of langage whan they lyst crye aloude
A.4.

Who taketh a Wyfe receyueth a greate charge
 In whiche he is full lyke to haue a fall
 With tempest tossed as is a bely barge
 There he was free he maketh hymselfe thall
 Wyues of poete ben full Imperyall
 Husbannes dare not theyr lustes gaynsaye
 But louely please and mekely them obaye

The husbannes euer abyeth in trauayle
 One labour passed there cometh an other newe
 And every daye she begynneth a batayle
 And in complaynyng chaungeth chere and hewe
 Under suche falsnes she sayneth to be true
 She maketh hym rude as is a dull asse
 Out of whose daunger impossible is to passe

Thus wedlocke is an endlesse prauaunce
 Husbannes knowe that haue experyence
 A martyrdome and a contynuaunce
 In sorowe euerlastyng a deedly byolence
 And this of wyues is gladly the sentence
 Upon theyr husbannes whan they lyst to be holde
 How they alone gouerneth the housholde

And yf her husbande happen for to thryue
 She sayth it is her prudent puruepaunce
 If they go abacke ayenwarde and bynthryue
 She sayth it is his mysgouernaunce
 He bereth the blame of all suche ordynaunce
 And yf they be poore and fall in dystresse
 She sayth it is his foly and lewdnesse

156
And yf so be he be no Werthman good
It may well happe he shall haue an hoine
A large bone to stufte with his hood
A motte behynde and fayned chere befoine
And yf it fall that they good be loine
By auenture eyther at euen or moztwe
The sely husbande shall haue all the soztwe

An husbande hath grete cause to care
For wyfe/for chyld/for stufte and meyne
And yf ought lacke she wyll bothe swere and stare
He is a wastoure and shall neuer the
And Salomon sayth there be thynges thre
Wherwode wyues/rapne/and smokes blake
Wpake husbandes ofte they houses to for sake

Wyues be bestes very vnchaungeable
In theyr desyres whiche may not staunched be
Lyke a swalowe whiche is insacpable
Peryllous carpage in the trouble see
A walwe calme full of aduersyte
Whose blandyssthyng endeth with myschaunce
Called Cyrenes euer full of varyaunce

They them reioyce to se and to be sente
And for to seke sondrye pylgrymages
At grete gaderynges to walke on the grene
And on scaffoldes to sytte on hygh stages
If they be fayre to shewe theyr bysages
And yf they be foule of loke or countenaunce
They it amende with pleasynge dalyaunce

A.iii.

And of profyte they take but lytell hede
 But loketh soure tohan they? husbandes apleth ought
 And of good mete & drynke they Wyll not sayle in dede
 What so euer it cost they care ryght nought
 For they care not how dere it be bought
 Rather than they sholde therof lacke or mysse
 They wolde leuer laye some pledge ywys

It is trewe I tell you yonge men euerychone
 Women be varyble and loue many wordes and stryfe
 Who can not appease them lyghly or anone
 Shall haue care and sorowe all his lyfe
 That woo the tyme that euer he toke a wyfe
 And Wyll take thought and often muse
 How he myght fynde the maner his wyfe to refuse

But that maner with trowth can not be founde
 Therfore be wyse or ye come in the snare
 Or ye take the waye of that bounde
 For and ye come there your ioye is tourned into care
 And remedy is there none so may I fare
 But to take payens & thynke none other way aboute
 Than shall ye dye a martyr without any doute

Therfore you men that wedded be
 Do nothyng agaynst the pleasure of your wyfe
 Than shall you lyue the more meryly
 And often cause her to lyue withouten stryfe
 Without thou arte unhappy into an euyl lyfe
 Than yf she than Wyll be no better
 Set her vpon a llande and bydde the deuyl fet her

158
Therfore thynke moche and saye nought
And thanke god of his goodnesse
And pzece not for to knowe all her thought
For than shalte thou not knowe as I gesse
Withouth it be of her owne gentylnesse
And that is as moche as a man may put in his eye
For yf she lyst of thy wordes she careth not a flye

And to conclude shortly vpon reason
To speke of wedlocke of fooles that be blente
There is no greter greife nor feller poyson
Nor none so dyedefull peryllous serpent
As is a wyfe double of her entent
Therfore let yonge men to eschewe sorowe and care
Withdrawe they? fete or they come in the snare

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Here endeth the payne and sorowe of euyl marriage.
Imprynted at London in fletestrete at the sygne
of the Sonne by me Wynkyn de Worde.

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